organized in the interest of the Union which could serve as rallying points to the Union men. So long as the rebellion continued in any form and to any extent, the State governments he contemplated would have been substantially in the control of really loyal men who had been on the side of the Union during the war. Moreover, he always emphatically affirmed in public as well as private utterance that no plan of reconstruction he had ever put forth was meant to be "exclusive and inflexible," but it might be changed according to different circumstances.

Now circumstances did change, they changed essentially, with the collapse of the Confederacy. There was no more organized armed resistance to the National Government to distract which loyal State Governments in the South might have been efficacious* But there was an effort of persons lately in rebellion to get possession of the reconstructed Southern State Governments for the purpose, in part, of using their power to save or restore as much of the system of slavery as could be saved or restored. The success of that effort was to be accomplished by the precipitate and unconditional readmission of the late rebel States to all their constitutional functions.

This situation had not yet developed when Lincoln was assassinated. He had not contemplated it when he put forth his plans of reconstructing Louisiana and other States. Had he lived, he would have as ardently wished to stop

bloodshed and to reunite all the States, as he ever did. But is it to be supposed for a moment that, seeing the late master class in the South, still under the influence of their old traditional notions and prejudices and at the same time sorely pressed by the distressing necessities of their situation, intent upon subjecting the freedmen again to a system very much akin to slavery, Lincoln would have consented to abandon those freedmen to the